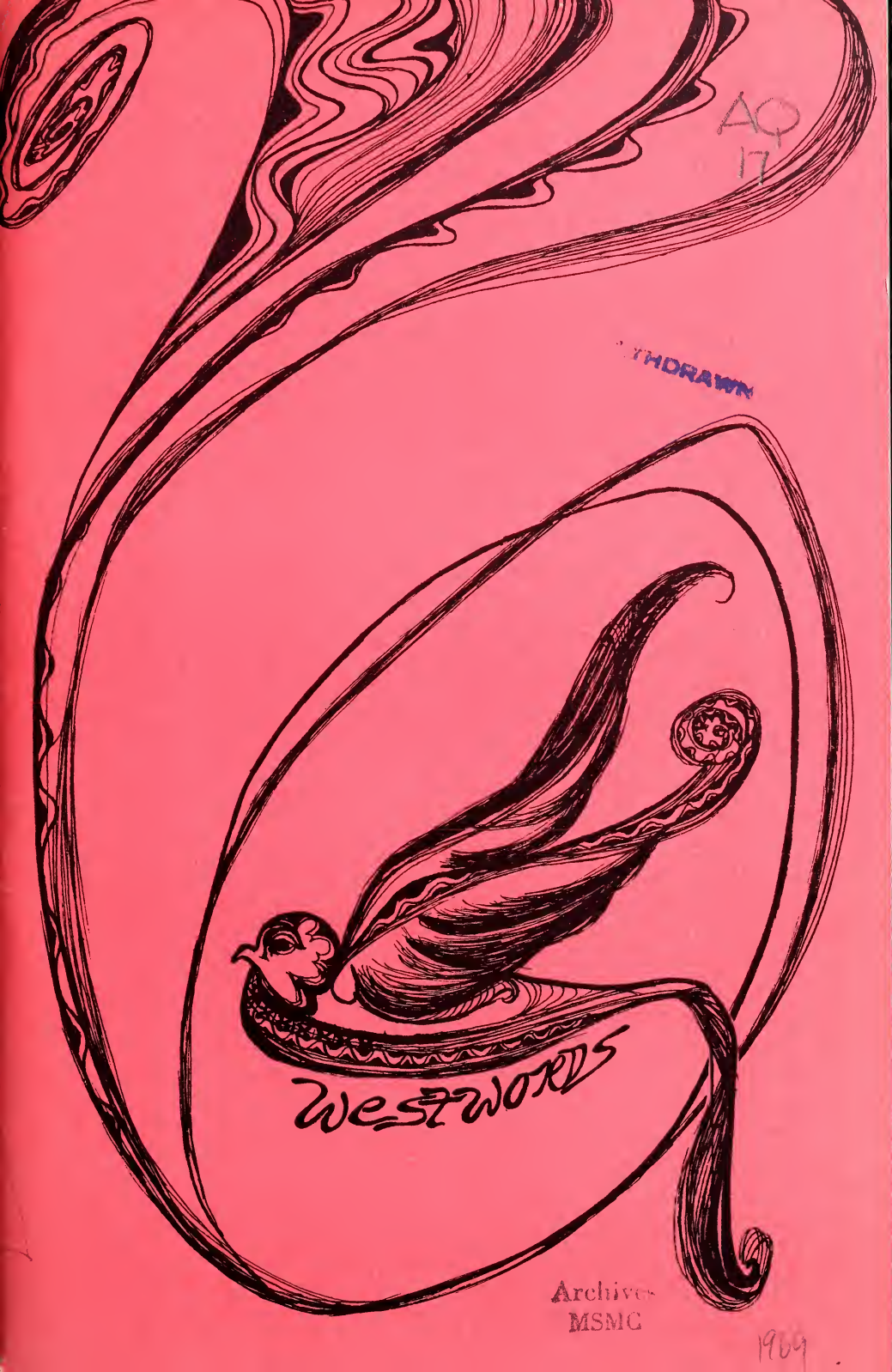
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WITHDRAWN
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WITHDRAWN

. . . God the Father almighty, Who made heaven and earth

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From the Editor

My father made a manger from two-by-four inch slabs and sanded paper. As children we would kneel with our faces close to the straw from the dairy and the paper snow blowing up our noses. And we would touch the grained sheep and the smooth folds of the shepherd robes and the Child. We were always getting lost there in the hills of Bethlehem in a wood-hewn stable.

Getting lost is an experience that is not only a part of childhood. The adult too can be caught and involved and returned to his world green and awakened. Perhaps by a poem.

For by words the world was called
Out of empty air.
With words was shaped and walled –
Line and circle and square,
Mud and emerald, –
Snatched from deceiving death
By the articulate breath.

from *The Animals*
Edwin Muir

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Boy on a Hill

"I will set him on high
because he acknowledges
my name" (Ps. 90).

Today a stranger brought my father word.
I was not there. Usually I am not.
Of eight sons, the youngest must go to herd.
No matter. I sing fearless with sling shot,

Harp and crook to sheep in shimmering grass.
They listen to songs never heard before
Which reel and jig from green field to high pass,
Across my king mountain, down to flocked moor.

Lambs, rams, ewes crowd round my sentineled staff
At the crown of my hill and there recline.
It is only my dull brothers who laugh
At boy dreams.
Even now one comes to whine:

"A stranger called Samuel asks for you."
So I have to leave fold, rock, grass and dew.

SISTER SEAN PATRICE SMYTHE, CSJ

Heron Feet

The great leap
from the window to the roof
is not so much
when you realize that
the heron does it every day
just to feel the wind in his feathers.

So what are you waiting for?
If you stand there
much longer you'll
be of no use to the sky
except to sneeze at the clouds.

Reach out then,
if you're afraid
and grab hold of the heron feet
then hug them for dear life
because you're in for the breezy night.

If you close your eyes
you won't have to think
of anything except those rough feet.
And then how gently
you'll be set down
on the roof near the chimney brick.

SISTER MARY SHAWNA, SND

What lifts the heron leaning on the air
I praise without a name . . .
St. Francis, being happiest on his knees,
would have cried Father! Cry anything you please.

But praise.

from *Snowy Heron*
John Ciardi

If You Could

You would
take my eyes
and have them see
a single tulip by a red brick wall
in the early spring;
but I would
wait till later
and stare
at lilacs near a chain-link fence
(and be happy)

You would
take my ears
and have them hear
toads inside a rubber box
on a hot summer night;
but I would
sit in the rain
and listen to sunfish jumping
out of water
into water
(and be glad)

You would
take my nose
and have it smell
walnuts roasting on an
autumn campfire;
but I would
lay down in a pile
of rusty leaves
and fill my lungs
(and feel good)

You would
take my hands
and have them hold
a winter-hard snowball
to throw at someone else;
but I would
clasp an icicle close
until its dripping death
(and feel sad)

You would
do a lot of things for me,
if you could;
but I have tasted
your kind of love
and I'd rather be
me
(and live)

KATHY JOHNSON

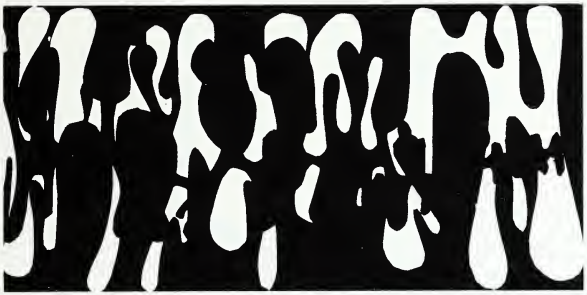
Patterns

Tied to dogs with love and slender leather
A maiden lady walks her dawn
And blinks through wrinkled curls as birds unravel
Morning behind a ruffled cage.

Tea cup clicking air in lavender
Staccato, she threads grey minutes through her day
And tracing shadows, tissues her tomorrow
As hands of clocks patch pigeon holes of time.

She sighs and shutters twilight, then with tired leash
Walks her lace evening, yawning at the moon.

ROMAYNE DOWD



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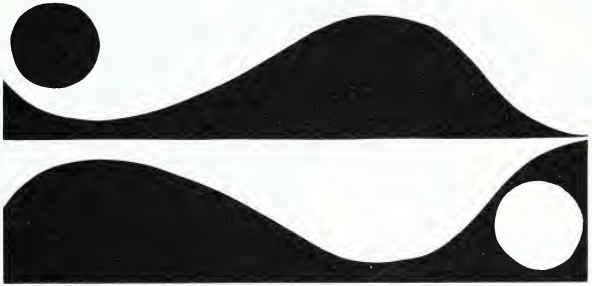

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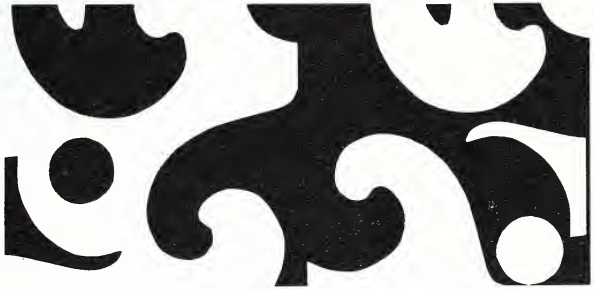

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Aside: To Job

Yahweh came down
a voice of storm winds and black
clouded thunder to ridicule pain into peace
to cower tears and aching despair into submission with mystery.
Old man, did He?
Old broken man – submission you know,
but peace?

Perhaps, for you, pain twisted
broken, now awe-filled and faith-stricken,
Job. Perhaps
for intimidated Israel.
But what answer, now answered Job,
for sharp tears and tearing despair hearing no
Yahweh in storm winded thunder?

CATHY HEDERING

Our River

Remember when we used to watch the river
Crawling along on muddy feet
Through the endless highway-levy.
You used to laugh and say it looked like
Chocolate milk and I asked you
If you would drink it
And you said no.
There was a raft expedition that year
We watched the river.
I lost an oarsman
And you an anchor in the runaway,
But we smiled and said that it was
great adventure.
We watched the craft drift away
And felt small in our grassy perch
Because the river had its way this once.
Somehow, we forgot our grievances
As we plunged bare feet into its lazy back,
And dreamed of swamps and alligators
Until the night shadows followed us home.
It was our river, we used to say,
As if we owned every drop of that awful water.
No one ever seemed to challenge that claim
And I imagine that no one wanted it
Like we did.

SISTER MARY SHAWNA, SND

Hogate's Hill

When I was young, a few short years ago,
the thing that all we children loved to do
Was slide down Hogate's back hill in the snow.
When I say children, I don't mean a few,
They'd come from three streets over, four streets down
To get a ride off Mrs. Hogate's wall.
She had the very highest hill around,
And I was always pretty sure I'd fall
The whole way down the slope and break my neck.
A kid stood by the streetside and he'd say
If any cars came. He stood there to check.
Sledding was our favorite kind of play.
Then, one spring day, we children lost all hope.
She planted azaleas half way up the slope.

MARY ANNE BURROUGHS

Jungle Lamp For Eva

Lady
in this black vine-roped jungle of
grief, of tear streaked pain
striped violet, veined crimson –
have you one flame
tongue's light, one emerald seed?

Mother
in this first fear of growing darkness,
first ache of exhaustion, anguish
of knowing a husband's love-shine bitterly
contorted – with these first searing tears
don't plant, oh Mother of us living, don't
grow first hate.

Eva
grow light – a golden glimmer of lost
gardens, and the Lord who lights jungles.
Grow love's light
for this tear stained, guilt smeared
Adam for this Lord of light . . . and of
love for this anguish broken Eva.

Lady Mother Eva
grow hope. Grow a greenly gorgeous vine
to penetrate this black
roped jungle and to carry golden
love lamps illuminating, yes, all violet
grief and crimson pain – but too, re-
newing this adam, revealing this Lord,
recreating this Eva.

CATHY HERDERING

Up from the bed of the river
God scooped the clay
And by the bank of the river
He kneeled down
And there the great God almighty
Who made the sun
And fixed it in the sky
Who flung the stars
To the most far corner of the night
Who rounded the earth in the middle of his hand
– This great God
Like a mammy
Bending over her baby
Kneeled in the dust
Toiling over a lump of clay
Until he shaped it in his own image.

Then into it he blew the breath of life
And man became a living soul. Amen. Amen.

from *The Creation*
James Weldon Johnson

BUT GOD'S OWN DESCENT

But God's own descent
Into flesh was meant
As a demonstration
That the supreme merit
Lay in risking spirit
In substantiation.
Spirit enters flesh
And for all it's worth
Charges into earth
In birth after birth
Ever fresh and fresh.
We may take the view
That its derring-do
Thought of in the large
Is one mighty charge
On our human part
Of the soul's ethereal
Into the material.

by Robert Frost

Marketday

The sellers of beans rattle their wares
while chickens cackle in close coops.
A shawled woman cradles two plums,
carefully weighing their purple merits.
In her palms the flesh shifts,
threatening to burst through speckless skins.

Maria de la Luz is drying her hair,
letting it hang heavy on her back.
Bold eyes slip under her thin blouse,
and finger her breasts,
searching for the delectable breakfast fruit.
Under the doorsill the beetle-bug slides.

At the shrine of the Infanta shadows flicker the walls
and in the red glow the world rests,
apple whole in the Infant's hands.
Wrapped in faith, widows finger their beads.
Their murmurs sound in the silent vaults,
like apple seeds seeking the earth's warm furrows.

On Carnival Sunday the trinket man comes,
boasting of rubies and pearls.
Children wave papayas on popsicle sticks.
The sweet juice dribbles their chins,
while Juan Manuel courts his *novias,*
seeking red lips in the shadows.

LAURIE BRASS

The World in A Painting

SISTER MONA ANN CASTELAZO, CSJ

Deeply rooted in the Chinese soul is a fear of the unknown cosmic power threatening to destroy the harmony between the human and supernatural orders. Traditionally, Chinese philosophers have sought to discover a unity within the universe, and Chinese artists have attempted to perfect a symbolic unity of form. The painters of the Sung dynasty produced landscapes which express a unified world view in a single painting, a harmonious blending of Buddhist and Taoist influences with the elemental fear of the mysterious. Such a painting is *A Temple on A Clear Day in the Mountains,* painted by Li Ch'eng.

Man occupies a small place indeed in the world of Li Ch'eng's painting. In order to see the tiny men, animals, bridges and shrines, one must magically diminish in imagination and enter the miniature village. The people go about their daily work. Two women gossip over weaving silk; a potter shapes an infinitesmal work of art; a woman balances water jars. Above the temple rise harsh mountains with scarab-like trees, dwarfing the village, almost engulfing it in the neutral tones of the painting. Li Ch'eng represents the Buddhist idea of impermanence in the typical village figures; they may die, but others will replace them. But the monochromatic coloring, blending village and mountains, suggests the unity of Tao: a unity born of man's yielding to the universe, of his becoming a part of it, rather than manipulating it or succumbing to evil within it.

Li Ch'eng represents Nature in terms of perspective. The sheer cliffs stand one above the other, vertically, obliging our vision to leap from one to the next as if each were standing on a different plane, rooted in clouds, or rising from another planet. We look down at the village and

the waterfalls high in the mountains, but at the same time we are looking up at the temple, which is below the falls. There is no fixed eye position. The artist has liberated his viewer from scientific perspective, just as Buddhism and Taoism liberate the disciple from empirical knowledge, from all appearances of external reality.

The Sung artist not only establishes man's place in the cosmos and liberates his mind; he also allows for mystery, for the supernatural, in his world. Claw-like, twisted trees, suggestive of primeval fears, surround the village and press thickly around the temple. But the message of the Tao is in the luminous mist banking the mountains, extending upwards to become sky, and downwards to become the river. Space here is like the Tao, "an empty bowl that can never be filled." Space becomes positive, holding the mountains, trees, and village before us as a mysterious unity, "a sacred vessel which is not to be tampered with."

The Sung painter, then, putting on the mind of the ancients, of Buddha and of Tao, presents his world to us in a single work of art. He suggests that we fear the cosmic forces, but urges us to bow respectfully before the mystery of the universe, and even to love the world; that, "our mind too, stripped bare like the mountain / Still cannot be without some basic tendency to love (Tao)."

Seascape

A single gull screeches
Waking my thoughts from your shoulder.
Ghost-wings push air behind and he
Rises from a craggy boulder,

Flutters to his flock
Of gulls gorging on
Quivering fish and they talk
Of kelp and brine.

Beyond a misty, hovering veil,
Playing with the wind and sea,
A single sail
Slips by on black water.

Pale mists thicken, stealing
Birds, boat and sea away,
While we, with certainty,
Wander mildly away.

KATHRYN WHITING

Rendezvous

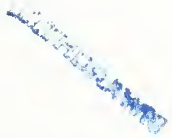
Oracles in orbit ride a star,
Trailing Delphic prophecy through space.
Computer-true, they capsule
Infinity in a sinking second
As open waves welcome spent Apollo
Reeling from a rendezvous
With his twin mistress moon.

ROMAYNE DOWD

Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent.

from *God's Grandeur*
Gerard Manley Hopkins



Chapultepac Park

Tlaloc, stone god who could not tarnish Aztec
gold, his ponderable permanent body chained
in lake ripples –
ate water neck
deep, ate the gnawing water and reigned
for centuries spewing raindrops fleet and small
like herbs on a dead land; piled black boulders, grumbling,
in high clouds, and swung a bow of colors tall
with his hands to challenge the sun –
crumbling
now with the biting water, he has lost
one eye, one foot, one arm and his surface; still
he lowers the trees with a crossed gaze, crossed
also over the cultivated garden, the museum filled
with glassed legends, and people wondering
what in the hell all this has to do with their
well protected and distant lives.

CHRISTA MAINZER

Sonnet to My Father

He's a kind of Paul Bunyan; little children
follow him like a legend. Grown men work
with him, driven by his strength. Men and children
find him their listener, for each a friend of worth.

He stands in the Legion kitchen laughing
and frying breakfast for three hundred members,
Or, sweat soaking the neck of his shirt and dripping
off the end of his nose, he uses farmer's

muscle, skilled on gardens and wood to work with
his tools for volunteer hours on Saturdays.
Not often is he at home in his green wing chair with
his feet on the coffee table, even on Sundays.

Not many come beside him without looking like a sapling
bent for sun below a redwood's giant reaching.

SISTER ANNA KLENS, CSJ

Icicles

Icicles falling
one
by
one
crack in the breeze
melt
in
the
sun
spearhead the snowbanks –
pock-marked and dun –
wink invitations
to boys on the run
stick to wool mittens
tingle the tongue
of the child who eats them
one
by
one.

SISTER CATHERINE MILLER, SDSH

Perhaps Prufrock

all every-days of course
are chaos.
Self forgets itself,
alone-, and lost-
ness, fear,
the vital questions
with no answers.
Self:
that each so single "I"
of every fear-
filled man
who dreads
to find his "I"
nothing
and lives, with relief,
empty chaos called
with irony "every-day"
– a day nothing but
frenzy fills with fear
of fear.

why called by any name,
this day and self, since
names are only masks
to hide unknown
essence, the being,
fact, and reality?
and names become facades
for truth, perhaps, that
essence is empty
nothing:
self and I
not free, not
felt, but simply
pure non-
entity.

CATHY HERDERING

Renewal Monologue

Yes, we (all) were there
in the front row,
didn't really want to go
but we did (to show we care
about some things other
than time and such)
Thought we'd learn to touch
our (black) brother;
answers (answers?) we'd be fed,
like . . . maybe why
we (all) must die
(and is God dead)?

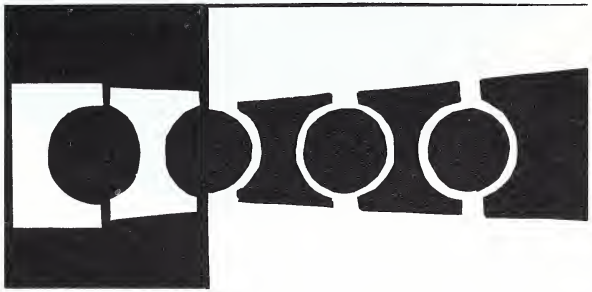
Listen, I've got to go,
(he is, you know)

RAMONA VANCE

designed by Keis Cartusciello

designed by Sr. Rebecca Ross, CSJ

designed by Betsy Finan



designed by Jane Marshall

Silence

In the beginning
There was one word ringing
From manger to mountain,
To halo oriental morning,
Shock the crimson air
With thorned echoes. Circling
Temples and tomb, it rose
To thunder through stone centuries, whispering
To a winter world.

ROMAYNE DOWD

The kings are toppled down and lie in sleet
The partridge in the pear tree flies away.
On some other feast or octave day,
If God will rest us merry, we shall meet . . .

If God shall rest us merry, we shall meet
Mary, singing down the winter street.

from *Candlemas*
L. McCarthy

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